



JESUS, TOUGH AND TENDER

Part 92 of Luke's Gospel: Investigating the Man Who Is God

Pastor Mark Driscoll | Luke 22:35-38 | October 02, 2011

Luke 22:35–38

³⁵ And he said to them, “When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?” They said, “Nothing.” ³⁶ He said to them, “But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one.” ³⁷ For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors.’ For what is written about me has its fulfillment.” ³⁸ And they said, “Look, Lord, here are two swords.” And he said to them, “It is enough.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

All right, Mars Hill, a couple good announcements. We want to congratulate Mars Hill Everett, we’ve launched our latest church. They had almost eight hundred in attendance on their opening Sunday, so that was a great success that we rejoice in. [Applauding] You could pray, as well. We are currently undergoing renovation to get larger facilities for Mars Hill Albuquerque and also Mars Hill Bellevue. We’re also in pursuit of some more seats for Mars Hill Downtown. And in January, we’re going to launch three churches, Lord willing, on one Sunday. We’ll start Mars Hill Rainier Valley in South Seattle, Mars Hill Portland, and also Mars Hill Orange County.

So, it’s a really great busy season for us, and a lot of wonderful things are going on. And this week, we have a really great thing to celebrate: Pastor Brad and Pastor Bill have new books that are debuting this week under the Re:Lit brand. TheResurgence.com is a ministry that we run. There’s Re:Train which is a school. There’s also Re:Lit, which is the publishing arm of the Resurgence ministry. We serve leaders around the world. It’s now the number one Christian leadership blog on the Internet and is growing very fast. And we have pastors from Mars Hill, as well as theologians and pastors from other churches, who publish for us.

So this week two new books are out, and I’ll introduce you to the authors. This is Pastor Bill. Do you guys know Pastor Bill? Pastor Bill. Pastor Bill wrote the book, *Disciple*, so congratulations. I know that feels good to get it out. Their books are both on sale at all Mars Hill churches starting this week, and they’re \$13 each or two for \$20. And if you buy the book at a Mars Hill church, all the profits go to the church. So, thank you guys for being generous. It’s also available on Amazon.com and elsewhere.

Pastor Bill, you’ve been in ministry for—we talked about this earlier—you’ve been a Christian for over forty years.

“Yeah.”

In ministry for over thirty years. What were you doing thirty years ago, Brad?

“I don’t know. I don’t know if I was even born.”

“We were praying for you.”

Thirty years ago, and you served, running what was, at the time, the largest college ministry in the United States of America, national director, North American director for Sonlife, which trained—

“We had over thirty thousand churches using our stuff.”

Over thirty thousand churches using your student ministry materials. In addition, you planted a church that is now Mars Hill West Seattle, and you’re the lead pastor at the biggest Mars Hill church, Mars Hill Ballard. And this is sort of a culmination of a lot of years of study and service, walking with Jesus, raising four kids who love Jesus. Maybe share with everyone the big idea behind the book, the motive.

“Well, Jesus says, ‘Go into all the world and make disciples,’ so there really isn’t something that’s a bigger E on the eye chart for Jesus than that we would be disciples and be making disciples. So, what we did was kind of say, okay, what is a disciple? And we looked at the idea, that’s somebody who is remade in the image of Jesus, so that as we image Jesus, when we image Jesus back to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that’s worship. When we image Jesus to one another, that’s called community. And when we image Jesus to an onlooking world that’s called mission. So, once we could get a picture of that’s what a disciple is, then that became kind of the target for everything Mars Hill does, whether it’s children’s ministry, or Community Groups, or even Sunday morning. It’s all about how

does it contribute to making a disciple?"

You hit identity, community, worship, and missions, so sort of four interactive ideas. It's a great resource. I'd encourage you to pick it up. It really does undergird and influence everything we do at Mars Hill. And Pastor Bill, I just want to publicly honor you. I know you've got a lot of job offers. There are a lot of places you could be. You've chosen to be with us. We're honored to have you. We love you, and we like you. And so thank you.

[*Congregation applauding*] And it really is a great book. I got to read it as Pastor Bill was working on the manuscript, so we're very grateful for his work.

And then corresponding with that is Pastor Brad's book, and he takes some of the big ideas in the *Disciple* book and then talks about how that plays itself out in Community Groups. So, Pastor Brad first showed up about ten years ago.

"About that, yeah."

And at the time, we had how many groups?

"We had five strong groups."

This many [*holding up five fingers*]. That's what my kindergartner says. This many. So, we had this many groups and now we have how many?

"We're closing in on five hundred."

That's better, so good job, Pastor Brad. Five hundred Community Groups. And tell us about the book *Community* and the motivation behind it, and how you hope to serve our church and others with it.

"Sure. I think the motivation behind what I was trying to say is that community is a gift from God, in that he wants us to enjoy community, and it's a way from Bill's book, how we can be disciples and we can image God to one another and how we can worship him and be on mission."

And for those who are at Mars Hill, what would be your plug for them to get in a Community Group? Since that's what we're always asking.

"Yeah, as we're always talking about what does it mean to be at Mars Hill, it's to come here on Sunday, hear the proclamation of the Word, to see that conviction on our heart, but also to work that out in community, so that we can work towards repentance and confession and enjoying who Jesus is."

For those who pick up the book, a couple of big ideas that thread the book together.

"Yeah, so big idea number one is that Jesus made it possible for us to enjoy community. It being a gift means it should be enjoyable and fun and lead to transformation, and then it works through what does it look like practically for us to live life in community that actually affects our neighborhoods?"

I just want to say thank you, as well. You've done a great job. I know for years Mars Hill was good at the big events, and then we struggled midweek, discipleship, community, on mission. And your work combined has been hugely influential and helpful. I just want to publicly say thank you. Mars Hill isn't where it is today without your work and effort and service, and so I wanted to publicly honor you both and help promote the book and would ask you all to buy a copy and be in prayer for them, okay? Isn't it cool? It's really cool.

And for me, I just want to publicly say it's really wonderful to work with humble, godly, fruitful men. And then to see their wisdom be shared with the world is a great honor, and we're really honored to have both of you, so thank you guys. I'm going to go ahead and pray for you, and then I'm going to yell at them, okay?

All right, Father God, thank you so much for Pastor Bill and Pastor Brad. God, we love them. We appreciate them. We respect them. We enjoy them. Thank you for the wisdom and the good deposit that they have made and are making, and by your grace will make for many years in Mars Hill Church. Thank you for Pastor Bill's new book, *Disciple*, and Pastor Brad's book, *Community*, and thank you, God, that these are not just books about theory, but they're about life, as these men are good thinkers and students, but they're also good pastors and servants. And God, I thank you for their character, knowing what kind of men they are. It's really an honor to be at this day and to celebrate with them. God, I pray for their resources, that they would not only be a blessing and a benefit to the people of Mars Hill Church, but to other churches, as well. And God, thank you that their commitment is ultimately to the Scriptures and to the Lord Jesus. And so, God, as we transition our time to open the Scriptures and to hear from Jesus, we want to just say thank you, Lord, that you've chosen us to be part of your work and sons of your kingdom. And God, we're very honored and grateful to serve, and so thank you for their service, and I ask now for my service, that we would serve our people well to Jesus' glory. Amen.

Love you guys. Thank you both. Isn't that cool? You have no idea how hard it is to write a book. You've probably read a book and thought, "That's not a great book." Try and write a book. Wow, that is some serious work. So, we want to honor them and the other Mars Hill pastors that are publishing.

And for me it's a great honor and joy.

THE BOOK

Well, that brings us to another book that we're going to talk about today, and that is the Word of God. And we're in what book of the Bible? Luke! Oh,

big shock. We've been in Luke now for a long time. This is actually part 92, if you're new. We're in Luke 22:35–38. We're looking at the life of Jesus, and today we learn that Jesus is both tough and tender.

And I'll start with this question for you. Let's say that the end of your life was shortly in front of you. You knew it wasn't years or months or weeks or even days, but it was hours, and your life would be over. You knew you were going to die, and you were right on the threshold of death, and it was going to be a painful, brutal, arduous, difficult, public, shameful death. What would you be thinking about? What would you be talking about? In those moments, really, what matters to us is exposed, and who we truly are is made known.

Well, this is where we find ourselves in the storyline of Luke's gospel. Jesus is just at the very precipice of his own murder. He is right there. It is the dark season of his life. He's going to die shortly. He knows it. He knows it is going to be brutal and bloody. And what does he talk about? What is he thinking about? The Scriptures. You're going to see that with me today. Jesus talks about the Scriptures. What gives him confidence, what gives him courage, what gives him clarity? It's the Scriptures, and it's a really wonderful example for us all. When life gets hard, go to the book. When life gets hard, go to the book.

And so the first thing I want to tell you, by way of preface, before we get into Jesus' words, is a simple big idea that undergirds everything at Mars Hill, and that is that God wrote a book, and this is it, that God wrote a book. And actually, as Jesus talks about the Scriptures today, that word means writing, and he's referring to the Word of God. Some will also refer to this as the Holy Bible, which means the holy book.

Some of you know this. Some of you are new Christians, or non-Christians, or visitors. You may not know this, but the Bible is actually a collection of books. It's a library of sorts. It's not organized chronologically, but by genre of literature. You've got history, and prophets, and wisdom literature, and poetry, and legal law, and the like. It's subdivided by category.

In your Bible, three-quarters, by length, is called the Old Testament, which is from the creation of the world up until four hundred years before Jesus Christ was born on the earth. And then in the middle, there are four hundred silent years where no book of the Bible is written. And then the New Testament is from the time of Jesus' birth through about the end of the first century, AD 100, around the death of John, the youngest of Jesus' disciples. And that is the history and the chronology of your Bible.

Thirty-nine books are in the Old Testament, twenty-seven in the New. So you've got sixty-six books altogether, penned by some roughly forty human authors, all inspired by God the Holy Spirit, writing across three languages and continents over the course of about fifteen hundred years of human history.

So, when we pick up this book, we pick up a miracle. We pick up a book that God wrote, and we pick up a book that God has preserved for us to read.

Again, Jesus, as he's approaching his own execution, his own murder, his own death, he's quoting the Scriptures from memory. That indicates it's a good thing for us to memorize the Scripture. He takes us to the Scripture to make sense of his own suffering.

CONSIDER ALL OF SCRIPTURE

Jesus has two big ideas about the Scriptures that I'm really excited to share with you today. The first is this: to consider all of Scripture, to consider all of Scripture. Now, there was a time in the history of the church where there was Scripture, but in addition to Scripture, there were other things that were added like human tradition, and reason, and councils, and theologians, and opinions. All of a sudden, the Scriptures, in some regards, started to lose their clarity, as they were cluttered by human thoughts.

The Protestant Reformation was an effort to clean up the teaching of the church and to return to the Bible and to say the Word of God is above every other word, and we want to hear the Word of God clearly, not encumbered by human tradition and religious speculation. And so one of the hallmarks of the Protestant Reformation—

And I'll just tell you this in advance. There are going to be some nerd parts to my sermon, okay? We're in one right now. So, if you're checking games and scores, just hang with me. I'll tell you a joke in a little bit, but for now, this is the nerd part of the sermon, okay? So, you're going to get Latin, and some of the nerds are like, "Yay!" But there are not a lot of you, okay? So, let's bring everybody else along.

TOTA SOLA SCRIPTURA

But one of the statements in the Protestant Reformation was *tota sola Scriptura*. It's a Latin phrase that means all of Scripture is alone our highest authority. What that means is, since God wrote this book, it's better than every other book. This is a perfect book. Every other book has errors. Even the best books that we write don't compare to the book that God wrote, and so our highest authority, the authority by which we test reason, and tradition, and religion, and philosophy, and sociology, and psychology is the Word of God, and that is our metaphorical supreme court of highest authority, and everything is tested by the Scriptures. Everything is tested by the Scriptures.

Now, in that, we need to be careful that we test by all of Scripture; otherwise, what happens is people go to the Bible, they take a part that they like, they ignore the parts they don't, or they sometimes just innocently but errantly build their whole life, or doctrine, or behavior on a section of Scripture without considering all that Scripture has to say.

So, *tota sola Scriptura*, we want to receive the whole Word of God. We want to study the whole Word of God. We want to examine everything by the whole Word of God, all of the Scriptures. Now, what Jesus is going to give us today in Luke 22 is a case study. It's a test study in *tota sola Scriptura*. And he actually begins in Luke 22 by referring back to Luke 10. So, we'll look at both of these verses, and then we'll unpack it.

Earlier in Luke, we read this. Luke 10:3–4, Jesus says to his disciples, “Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals.” So, Jesus looks at his disciples, says, “Pack nothing: no food, no money, no supplies, no weapons. You’re like a lamb. You’re like a lamb.”

Now, if you only obeyed this verse and didn’t practice *tota sola Scriptura*, do you know what we’d do today? Well, we’d take your purse, ladies. We would take your wallet, gentlemen. We would take your shoes, right? We would take all of your provisions, and we would send you out of here saying, “Hey, Jesus said take nothing with you.” Now what do you think about that? I see women clutching their purse. I can see that. But this is what Jesus said, right?

And if I came to you, and I said, “Hey, Jesus said no shoes. Shoes off!” You’re like, “Really? It’s a sin to wear shoes?” “Jesus said it! “And no backpacks and definitely no fanny packs, for a variety of reasons, some of which are theological. Some of them are just aesthetic and style related. And no money. Hey, you’re going out. You don’t need money. You don’t need a debit card. You don’t need any supplies. Don’t you trust the Lord? Oh, you’re going back to college? Don’t buy books. Trust the Lord. He’ll bring books. He brought food to Elijah by the ravens. He could bring a geometry text to you. You’ll be fine. Trust in the Lord.”

Jesus is going to quote this verse, and he’s going to do so today in Luke 22:35–36, 38. “And he said to them, ‘When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?’ They said ‘Nothing.’” He said, “Do you remember back in Luke 10? I told you don’t take anything.” Well, what about today? “He said to them, ‘But now let the one who has a moneybag take it.’” Grab your wallet or your purse. “‘And likewise a knapsack.’” Bring some supplies. “‘And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one. . . .’” And they said, ‘Look, Lord, here are two swords.’ And he said to them, ‘It is enough.’”

Well, which is it, Jesus? Pack supplies or don’t pack supplies? Be ready or don’t be ready? Wear shoes or don’t wear shoes? Pack a weapon or don’t pack a weapon? Which is it? And it all depends on the mission. It depends on what you’re being sent to do. He says, “On this mission, take nothing; on this mission, take everything.”

Now, if we only had this verse, and we didn’t practice *tota sola Scriptura*, you would say, “How do you know they’re Christians?” “Well, because they had pockets full of money, had a backpack full of supplies, and they’re always carrying firearms. That’s how we know who the Christians are, right? Because Jesus said get a weapon, pack a backpack, and bring some cash.” Right? Well, which is it? Again, *tota sola Scriptura*. Look at what the whole Bible says.

The truth is, sometimes you should raise money. Sometimes you shouldn’t. Sometimes you should pack supplies. Sometimes you shouldn’t. Sometimes you should defend yourself. Sometimes you shouldn’t. It all depends on the mission. So, you’ve got to consider what Jesus is calling you to in that moment, in that moment.

I’ll say this, too. Some of you may have this question. You say, “What does ‘sword’ mean?” “Sword” means sword. And what happens is some Christians read the Bible, and they say, “Well, Jesus couldn’t have said get a weapon.” But he did. Later on, Peter is going to grab a sword and cut a guy’s ear off. And it wasn’t a hypothetical sword. It wasn’t a metaphorical sword. You ask the guy who lost his ear, it was pretty sword-like, right? It just was. Here Jesus is saying there are times when it’s okay to carry a weapon. So, you can be a soldier, so you can be a police officer. So, there are appropriate ways to defend oneself.

TOUGH AND TENDER

Let me say it another way. In Luke 10, you need to be tender. And he’s saying in Luke 22, you need to be tough. Because in Luke 10, he says to be like a lamb. Can you think of anything more tender than that? Let’s say, tonight, you go home and your neighbor comes banging on your door late at night, and they say, “Look, there’s a wild animal on the loose in the neighborhood.” “What is it?” “A lamb.” You’re like, “Awesome. I’m going to go find it. That sounds fantastic. That’s so cute. I just tucked my kids in. I told them to count lambs, because there’s nothing more soothing than the concept of a lamb?” Right? That’s tender. Luke 22, tough. Supplies, money, boots on the ground, bullets in the chamber, off to conflict. Wow. Tough and tender.

Now, here’s what happens. How many of you, let me ask, how many of you tend to be more tender? You’re more tender. All the verses on love, grace, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, forbearance, longsuffering, turning the other cheek, loving your enemies, you like those, because that’s how you are. How many of you are more tough? All the hell, wrath, judgment, flood, fire, brimstone— “Yeah! Love me them verses.” Right?

How many of you even then, when it comes to Jesus, some of you go to Jesus and you say, “I just fondly recall all the tender stories about Jesus.” How many of you fondly recall all the tough stories about Jesus? See how this works? If we don’t practice *tota sola Scriptura*, we see Jesus as either tender or tough.

And here’s the truth. Some of you are too tender; you need to be more tough. Some of you are too tough; you need to be more tender. And it’s true for all of us. What do you think about me? You all chuckle. Too tender, too tough? Which way would I lean? Tough. And then God gives me daughters, which is grad school for tender. Okay? And so God wants us all to grow in being tender and tough.

And so you men, let’s say I can just have a moment to talk frankly with the men. We want you to be tough and you need to be tender. We’ve got to be both. I’ll give you an example. You’re a man with a daughter or daughters. Tough or tender? Tender. A really bad guy keeps pursuing her. Tough or tender? Sword. Right? Boots on the ground, bullets in the chamber, right? Tough. So, you need to learn to be tough and tender.

How about Jesus? Here's what we'll do. We'll do case study. Luke 10, Jesus says, "Be tender." Luke 22, Jesus says, "Be tough." And Jesus is God without sin among us. He's the perfect person, and he shows us what the perfect life looks like, and sometimes he's tender, and sometimes he's tough, and sometimes he's tough and tender at the same time.

So, we'll do this. We'll look through Luke. I'll just run through Luke and a few things. Luke 4, Satan comes to Jesus, tempts him, tests him, tries him. Jesus says no to all temptation and defeats Satan. Tender or tough? Tough. I mean, how tough do you have to be to win a fight with Satan? That's pretty tough.

Luke 4, Jesus begins his public ministry by quoting Isaiah 61. "The Spirit of the Lord has anointed me to preach good news and to set captives free." And he says this in the synagogue, and some people get angry, and there's a controversy, and it is really debated. Tough or tender? You gotta be pretty tough, gotta be pretty tough to open the Bible and say, "I'm here," knowing that there will be a strong reaction.

Luke 4, Jesus is casting demons out of people. Tough or tender? Well, it's tender for the person, but it's tough with the demon, right? If you asked the guy who got delivered, he'd say, "That was very tender." You ask the demon, he'd say, "That felt a little tough to me." Jesus exercising his spiritual authority. "We had a conflict, and he defeated me." That's tough.

Luke 4, Simon has a mother-in-law who's sick, and Jesus heals her, and Jesus heals others, as well. Tender or tough? Tender. Jesus healing the sick, that's tender, right? I mean, if you heard—today, there was a pastor with a gift of healing, and he was looking for older women and visiting burn wards in hospitals to heal the sick. You would say that is tender, and it is very tender.

How about Luke 5? There's a paralytic and a leper. Lepers were outcast and despised, and the paralytic had been crippled for years, in constant chronic pain. Jesus comes and gives them full healing. Tough or tender? Really tender. He's loving people who are suffering.

Luke 6, there's a man with a withered hand, and Jesus heals him in front of his religious critics. Tender or tough? Both. It was tender that he would heal the man, and he had to be tough to do that in front of his critics, because he knew they would fight with him, and argue with him, and disagree with the way that he did it.

How about this one? Luke 7, there's a soldier who has a servant, and there's a widow who has a son, and Jesus heals them both. Jesus actually takes this widow's son and brings him back from death. Her husband has died. She's all alone. She's only got a son. Her son dies. Jesus brings him back and gives him back to his mother. Tender or tough? Really tender, right? Can you see the moment where Jesus brings her son back to life and reintroduces the risen son to his mother, can you see the look on her face and the joy in her heart? "My dead son is back!" And she goes from weeping to rejoicing. It's a very tender moment in the ministry of Jesus.

Here's another one in Luke 7. Jesus is having dinner at a Pharisee's home, religious critics. In walks a sinful woman. She's not supposed to be there. And according to their tradition, not God's laws, she's not to interact with religious leaders. Jesus forgives her of sin and befriends her in front of his religious critics. Tender or tough? It's both, isn't it? He's very tender with her, but he does it openly and publicly in front of them, knowing that he will incur their wrongful wrath. And you've gotta be tough to do that. You've gotta be tough to do that. It's one thing to help someone or to say something, but to say it in the midst of opposition and criticism with those who are seeking to oppose you, you've got to be tough to stand up to that, and Jesus does.

Luke 8, the story is of a demonized man, right? We've been in Luke for a couple of years, here's a quick little review. Remember the guy in Luke 8? Here's what we know about him. He's homeless, crazy, lives out in the wilderness, pretty much naked, hasn't seen a bar of soap in a really long time, and it says he's filled with a legion of demons. I don't know how many a legion is. It's a lot. They've tried to capture this guy. He breaks the chains and runs free. This guy's a piece of work. Jesus casts all the demons out of him, restores him to his right mind. The guy gets all cleaned up and goes into ministry. Is that tender or tough? Both, right?

It's like, "Hey, weren't you the crazy, homeless, naked, beating-people-up guy?" "I was, and now I've planted a church." Wow. Who took that counseling appointment? Right? Well, Jesus did. Really? Would you take that counseling appointment? "Hello, your next appointment is here." "Who is he?" "He's the crazy, naked, homeless guy carrying a huge stick." "Tell him I'm busy forever." Right? Jesus is tough enough to take that guy on and tender enough to cast the demons out and change his whole life. So, Jesus is tender, Jesus is tough, and sometimes he's tough and tender at the same time.

Luke 9, he feeds 5,000 men plus the women and children. Tender or tough? Well, tender. Jesus is feeding people. Luke 9, there's a boy with a demon. Jesus heals him and casts out the demon, and his physical health is restored. Tender or tough? Really tender. Imagine this was your kid and Jesus healed him.

Luke 11, Jesus preaches this really intense sermon. "Woe to you religious critics!" He's quoting the Old Testament prophets, or I should say more accurately, he's echoing the Old Testament prophets. "Woe, woe, woe! You're cursed of God! Turn and repent! You're in the path of the wrath of God!" He preaches it to his critics in their face. Is that tender or tough? That's pretty tough. That's like preaching racial reconciliation at a Klan rally. You've got to be pretty tough to do that. This is what Jesus does. He is telling people that they are wrong to their face, when they outnumber him and oppose him.

Luke 13, there's a woman who's been physically disabled, we read, for eighteen years, chronic pain. Jesus heals her. Tender or tough? So very tender. Are you seeing that Jesus is often tender with hurting people and tough with religious people? You noticing this trend?

Luke 14. He heals a man on the Sabbath. Tender or tough? Both. Tender, he heals the man. Tough, he does it on the Sabbath, knowing that the religious people aren't going to like that, because God didn't say you couldn't heal on the Sabbath, but they did, and he's breaking one of their rules. You've got to be tough to do that.

Luke 18, the story is a whole bunch of children come to Jesus. Tender or tough? Really tender. Jesus doesn't say, "Bring me two swords." It's not sword time. It's Toys-R-Us time. It's a different time, right? Can you think of anything in the Bible more tender than Jesus with the kids? It's super tender. He's like Santa Claus, and they're all coming to play with him and jump on his lap and have fun around him.

Luke 18, Jesus heals a blind beggar, poor outcast. Tender or tough? Really tender, really tender.

Luke 19, Zacchaeus is a crook and a criminal, and he's up in a tree looking at Jesus, and Jesus calls to him. "I'm going to save you, and I'm going to be your friend, and I want to do dinner at your house!" And he goes to Zacchaeus' house and has dinner with Zacchaeus and all of his friends. Tender or tough? Both. Really tender for Zacchaeus and all of his friends. Zacchaeus was shocked. "You want to be my friend, Jesus? I'm a horrible person." Jesus says, "You know what? That's why I'm here. I'm here to change horrible people."

Zacchaeus is like, "If you're looking for horrible people, I've got so many friends, it's unbelievable. I'll have all the horrible people over. You can meet them all." And the religious people look at him and say, "Ah, he's a friend of sinners. Look at who he's hanging out with." And praise God, Jesus is still a friend of sinners. That's why he's willing to hang out with you with me, right? So he was tender toward Zacchaeus, but he was tough in saying and doing this openly and publicly, knowing he would incur the wrath of the religious.

Last one, Jesus goes into the temple in Luke 19, and he sees in the outer courts, the court of the Gentiles, all the corrupt business, and people getting ripped off, and God turned into a business, and he throws the tables over, and he declares war, and this is all corrupt. Tender or tough? Really tough, because those places were rented by Herod, the political leader. Now you're declaring war on the religious establishment and the government. You've got to be tough to do that.

So back to my original question. Is Jesus tender or tough? The answer is yes. He's tender and tough, and sometimes he's tender and tough at the same time. How about you? Do you tend to be more tender, or do you tend to be more tough? Or to say it another way, do you tend to be Luke 10 or Luke 22?

And if you don't practice *tota sola Scriptura*, you're just going to get verses and portraits of Jesus that fit either tender or tough, and you will reduce Jesus to that, and then you will seek to be like him, hopefully by the grace of God, but the truth is you won't be obeying all that the Bible says, only some of what the Bible says. Some of you need to be more tender. Some of you need to be more tough.

CONNECT ALL OF SCRIPTURE TO JESUS

God wrote a book. God wants us to receive the whole book. God wants us to consider all of Scripture. Point number two, he wants us to connect all of Scripture to Jesus. Again, this is really important. There are a few different ways to view this book. Some people would say that this is a book of great advice. It's not. There is some great advice in here, but that's not the primary point of the book. If it's primarily filled with great advice, then the book is about you and me, but the book is not about you and me. The book is for you and me, but it's about Jesus. Okay, Mars Hill?

This is really important, because you can pick up the book, and you can just read it for good advice instead of good news. You can think it's about you and not about Jesus and get some moral truisms to live a more ethical life, and die and go to hell, because you're not even a Christian. You're just treating this like a psychology manual or a self-help book or pithy ancient wisdom for daily living, and it's more than that.

It's a book that God wrote about Jesus Christ. And so it's not a book about Abraham. It's not a book about Noah. It's not a book about David. It's a book about Jesus, and the cast of characters includes Abraham, and Noah, and David. But it's not about them. So, when God tells Abraham, "All the nations will be blessed through your descendant," that descendant is Jesus. When Noah builds an ark and saves a multitude from death, it's simply a portrait of what Jesus would come and do for more people to a greater degree, that he would save us not just from death, but from eternal death. When David slays Goliath, the story is not, "And here's some moral truisms. You can slay your giants." It's that David came from a family line, and Jesus is from the line of David, and David was the one that nobody would've expected to be the warrior. And Jesus comes like that, and David slays a giant, and Jesus conquers Satan. He's bigger and better than David.

So just by way of analogy, I'm trying to illustrate for you, Mars Hill, the book is about Jesus, and all the people, and all the stories, and all the principles are ultimately part of the subplot connecting to the storyline that we are sinners, and Jesus comes as our Savior. And the book doesn't make any sense unless it's all connected to Jesus. This is exactly what Jesus repeatedly, emphatically, and clearly taught. We've seen it earlier in Luke. We'll see it at the end of Luke, and we see it again today in Luke 22:37.

Here, Jesus quotes Isaiah 53:12. Here's what he says. "For I tell you that this Scripture—" we're back to the book that God wrote— "must be fulfilled in me: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors.'" That's a quote of Isaiah 53:12. "For what is written about me has its fulfillment." What is Jesus saying? "This whole book is now being fulfilled in my life. I am here fulfilling everything that is written in the book that God wrote."

Jesus is on the precipice, again, of his crucifixion, of his death, his burial, his resurrection, and he knows this is all according to plan. This is all according to Scripture. This is all in the fulfillment of the eternal plan of God that is now working itself out in history. That's exactly what he says. And he quotes Isaiah 53:12.

Now let me say this. Isaiah 53:12 is the final verse in a lengthy proclamation by the Holy Spirit through Isaiah about the coming of Jesus. It's the crowning culmination. It's the massive fireworks explosion to end as a crescendo, this amazing, magnificent section. So, guess what we're going to do? We're going to go where Jesus went. We're going to go to Isaiah. If you've got a Bible or an app, go to Isaiah 52. And this section starts in Isaiah 52:13, and it moves to Isaiah 53:12, which Jesus quotes.

Again, Jesus is on his way to his death, and what he has in his mind is Scripture. This is so practically helpful for us, to know the Word of God, to trust the Word of God, to memorize the Word of God so that we can recall it in seasons of testing and suffering.

Isaiah 53:12, the context here beginning in Isaiah 40 through 66 is the servant, that God the Father is sending a servant into human history to serve us. And it's written—this is really helpful and important—seven hundred years before Jesus was born, seven hundred years before Jesus is born. And it tells us about a servant who is coming in very precise detail.

Some of you are here, and you say, "I don't know if I believe the Bible. I don't know if I trust the Bible." I was in that same position. I heard what other people had said about the Bible, but I hadn't really heard the Bible. So, what I want to do is I want to give to you a gift that someone gave to me, and that is walking through and unpacking the prophetic promises of Isaiah 52 and 53; and this was used of God to really bring me to a deep faith, firm conviction that this is, in fact, the book that God wrote, because no one would know history in this detail. No one could rule over history in this detail other than God, other than God. Seven hundred years before Jesus, twenty-seven hundred years ago, this is what was written. Are you ready? Am I the only one that's excited? Are you ready?

THE PROPHETIC PROMISES OF ISAIAH 52–53

Isaiah 52:13. "Behold," God says. "My servant—" So, again, God is sending into human history a servant— "shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted." When did that happen for Jesus? When was he high and lifted up? On the cross. On the cross. Back to the story of Luke, he quotes this section of Isaiah on his way to the cross.

"As many were astonished at you—his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind." How are we going to treat this servant? We are going to beat him. We are going to batter him. We are going to bloody him. Jesus was beaten by a mob, swollen, bloodied, beard plucked out, which was disgrace in the ancient world. The Bible says then he was scourged, where the flesh was ripped off his body. He was a bloodied mess. Had you known Jesus and seen him being crucified, you would not have recognized him. He didn't even look like the same man, just a swollen, bloodied, fatigued, beaten, absolutely crushed, destroyed man. That's what we did to the servant of God.

"So shall he sprinkle many nations." And the wage for sin is death, and sin requires death, and the way this was typified in the Old Testament is that the high priest, as the mediator between God and his people, would offer a sacrifice, and that animal would be a substitute for the sinful people, and the blood would be shed in place of their sin, and then the blood would be sprinkled. And what he's saying is the blood of this servant is sprinkled in our place for our sin. That's the Bible's language for atonement.

"Kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told them they see, and that which they have not heard they understand." What he's talking about here is that Jesus would come unlike all other kings and all other rulers and all other leaders. See, Jesus came to serve, not be served. He came to give, not to take. He came to love. He came to forgive. He came to bless. He came to serve. He came giving himself away as a gift.

And it says that leaders, particularly political leaders, who have selfish motives—no matter how good a human leader might be, their motives are never pure. Their humility is never consistent. And it says as senior leaders and political leaders and powerful leaders consider Jesus, they're just silenced. They've never seen anyone like him. They've never seen anyone lead like him and love like him, just silenced, stunned, that God would be among us and love us, and that we would treat him so horrifically. It causes us to just ponder. Are we that bad, and is he that good? And the answer is yes to both.

Isaiah 53, "Who has believed what he has heard from us?" We want you to believe. "And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" This analogy here is that we're like the enemies of God who have run from God and fled from God, and we fight against God, and God, through the person and work of Jesus Christ, extends an arm of salvation and friendship. Jesus is the means by which the Father extends a hand of friendship to you and to me and to us. We want you to take his hand. We do that by faith.

Well, how will he come, this servant? Again, it's written seven hundred years before Jesus was born. How will we know that he is coming? Isaiah 53:2, "For he," that is Jesus, "grew up before him," that is God the Father, "like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground." You ever been in a barren desert place and hardly anything is growing, and nothing is flourishing, and you see one small plant sprout? You think to yourself, "Not much is going to come of that." The soil is bad. Nothing else is fruitful. That little plant doesn't stand a chance.

He says, "When I send my servant, my suffering Son servant, he's going to come like that. You're going to look at him. You're going to say, 'He's grown up where? Nazareth?'" Somebody asked a rhetorical question in the Bible "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" The answer is nothing good has ever come from Nazareth. If something does come from Nazareth, that's pretty amazing.

I've been to Nazareth. It's a little dinky town. In Jesus' day, it was a very small town, a hundred people maybe. They had one well, one well. You can't sustain a large population on one well. Was it in the city, or was it in the country? It was really in the country. These are hill folk. These are uneducated people. These are common peasants. They grow crops, and they go fishing. They don't have access to city life, and education, and libraries. These are not those people. The homes that they lived in that day, four to five hundred square feet. That included the stalls for the animals.

"The servant is here! The suffering servant, the Son of God, the Savior of the world is here!" "Where is he at?" "Nazareth." "Well, what was his first

crib like?" "Well, it was a feeding trough of an animal." "Was his mom a queen?" "No, she was a junior high girl." "What?" "They're in the country." "Well, what about his dad?" "He's a carpenter." "Well, what's the Lord doing?" "He's making a table." "Are you sure we've got the right guy?"

How many of you, you wouldn't come into human history like that. I wouldn't. Oh, we have angels? Bring the angels, right? Carry me in. Somebody give me a crown. I want a fruity drink. I want trumpets blasting. I want somebody with a big banner! Here comes the Lord! I mean, I'm rolling in a way that Jay-Z's like, "That's an amazing entrance right there." That's how I'm rolling in. I'm rolling in big. Not Jesus. Humble, poor, rural. The Bible predicted you wouldn't expect Jesus to come like that.

Well, what's he going to look like? How many of you have seen the pictures of Jesus? Just so you know, they're not real pictures. We don't know exactly what Jesus looked like. This is the closest that we get to a description. Usually the pictures of Jesus are with long hair; probably not true. First Corinthians 11 says men had short hair in that day. Usually, he's got nice European features. He wasn't very European, more Middle Eastern, more Jewish—in fact, Jewish. Right? You watch the early films of Jesus. All the early films of Jesus, you could tell who Jesus is, because he's always got this glow about him, like he works at a nuclear reactor, you know, he's kind of got that look. Oh, how do you know it's Jesus? Well, look. He's glowing. Did he look that? No.

Here's what he looked like. This is the closest we get in the whole Bible to a description of the appearance of Jesus. "He had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him." He looked normal. He wasn't going to do Gap ads. He looked normal. How many of you, if you were God coming into human history, not only would your entrance be amazing, you'd be looking pretty good. A lot better than you do right now, that's for sure. He came normal, just looking regular.

You say, "Well, how would we treat him, then, this humble, simple, suffering servant Son?" Verse 3, "He was despised and rejected by men." People hated him, and they rejected him. I pray you would not reject Jesus today. "A man of," what? "Sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

Some of us still despise him and don't esteem him. "Oh, that's what he said. That's what he thought." Sometimes we practice what C. S. Lewis called, "chronological snobbery." "That was a long time ago. Thankfully, we're a lot smarter than they were." Are you sure? That's more than a little proud.

And it says that he was a man of sorrows, and he was familiar with grief. Jesus experienced the full range of human emotion. Sometimes religious people will not practice *tota sola Scriptura*, and they'll say things like, "You should be happy! The joy of the Lord is your strength!" Yeah, but it's a hard day. And the Bible does say, if we look at all the Scriptures, there's a time to laugh and a time to weep, that we should rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. Jesus sometimes laughed and sometimes cried. That it's perfectly acceptable to have moments of rejoicing and moments of weeping.

It tells us that Jesus would be a man of sorrows, familiar with suffering, acquainted with grief. If your life is only always weeping, and dark, and hard, and morose, it's not fully biblical. If your life is always chipper, and smiling, and happy, and faking it, it's not entirely biblical. There'll be days and moments of rejoicing. There'll be days and moments of weeping. There were for Jesus. There are for the people of God. Our God fully felt the spectrum of human emotion.

So, why would this happen? Why would God come as a servant? Why would God come humbly, and simply, and poorly, and rurally? Why would he do that? Verse 4, "Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted." Well, he came to suffer. He came to die. And when people looked at Jesus, they thought, "Surely God must have cursed him." Because it said all the way back in Deuteronomy, "Cursed is a man who's hung on a tree." And when they crucified Jesus, he was hung on a tree. He was cursed of God. God was cursed.

The question is why? And what's going to happen in the next verse, and it happens then repeatedly throughout the rest of Isaiah 53, and then Paul picks it up in the New Testament, and the Bible says over and over, this little word "for." It's really important. Here's what'll happen to Jesus. Why did that happen? "For" this reason. "For." "God demonstrates his love for us in this. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "No greater love has anyone than this, that they lay down their life for their friend." "What we received we pass on to you of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."

See, the Bible uses this word "for" a lot to tell us that Jesus came and served us by suffering and dying, and he did it all for us. He never sinned, and we've all sinned, and he suffered as our substitute, paying the penalty for sin, which is death. You can read it for yourself. Isaiah 53:5, "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed."

This is the great exchange. This is substitution. In the garden, human beings substituted themselves for God, and on the cross God substituted himself for us, and he suffered and died in our place for our sins, as our substitute, our servant, and our Savior. That's the Son of God. That's the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus never sinned, and Jesus died for my sin. The death he died is the death I deserve, and he did that for me.

Do you trust in him? Have you received him? Have you come to him? If not, that is what God has in store for you, and you're in the path of the wrath of God, and Jesus is the Savior. Jesus is the hero. Jesus is the deliverer. That's—again, *tota sola Scriptura*—that's what the whole book says. You receive Jesus in a tender way today, or you stand before him in a tough way at the end.

He goes on, "By his stripes we are healed." Because of his suffering, we receive healing. For some, that means physical healing in this life. We pray for

the sick, and sometimes God, in his providence, does heal. It also means at the resurrection of the dead, all of God's children are fully healed forever, and there is healing eternally for the people of God, because of the sufferings of Jesus.

Why is this necessary? Verse 6, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way." We've just turned our back on God and done whatever we wanted to do. And like foolish sheep in the path of danger, we have jeopardized our own eternal soul.

"And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity [or the sin] of us all." So, here's the good news, friends: There's an answer for sin, and that's the suffering of Jesus. You don't need to punish yourself. Jesus already suffered. You don't need to deny your sin, blame others, ignore your sin. You need to confess, "I have gone astray, and the Lord has laid on him my sin." He is the suffering servant. He is the Son of God. He is the Savior. I really need you to know that. I need you to believe that. I need you to trust that.

He goes on. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth." Jesus did not defend himself. He went to the cross tough. He wasn't whining and complaining. He was suffering and dying.

"By oppression and judgment, he was taken away." Those were his arrests. "And as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off from the land of the living?" That's death, that we'd murder the servant of God. He would be cut off from the land of the living. We would kill him.

"Stricken for—" there's our word again—"the transgression of my people." We would murder the servant, and that would be used, in the grace of God, as our salvation. That's how great God is. God takes the worst evil and uses it to pour out the most grace. "And they made his grave with the wicked—" Jesus was crucified between two guilty thieves—"and with a rich man in his death." Was Jesus rich? Yes or no? No. He was buried in a rich man's tomb. Yes or no? Yes.

And here's how it worked. The Scripture prophesied how Jesus would live, how he would die, and where he would be buried, seven hundred years before he was born. Dear friend, please don't hear this and say, "I don't believe the Bible. Men wrote that book." Men don't know the future. Men don't control the future. Men don't predict the future, not with this kind of painstaking detail. This is the book that God wrote about the Savior that God provided. That's what it's about. And it says that he would be buried with the rich in his death. Jesus was poor, died, did not have a burial plot, and someone, a man named Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy man, gifted to Jesus postmortem his own personal burial place. Jesus was buried with the rich in his death in fulfillment of Isaiah, but three days later, he gave it back. It was just a temporary stay.

"Although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth." Did Jesus ever sin in word or deed? No. "Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief." This was the plan of the Father, that we might have salvation. "When his soul makes an offering for guilt—" We're guilty, that he would die and pay our debt. "He shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days." What is that? Mars Hill, that's the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. That's the victory over Satan, sin, death, hell, and the wrath of God.

Here's what it says. He would live. We would treat him brutally. He would die. He would be buried in a rich man's tomb, and then he'd keep on living. That's exactly what it says. Jesus rose from death. Seven hundred years in advance, God wrote a book and told us it would happen.

Do you know what's amazing at this point in history? The Jews didn't even have a concept of an individual resurrection. Their only concept was of a national resurrection at the end. They had no concept of an individual resurrection in the middle of history. Here's Isaiah writing this: "What? Seriously? Okay. I'm just the court stenographer. I write the mail. I don't make the content." These are things that people haven't even considered and God is revealing.

"And the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." People will be saved. Sin will be forgiven. Satan will be crushed. Eternity will be altered. "Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied—" resurrection—"by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous."

Here's the big question. How can God, who is holy and just and true, possibly look at guilty sinners like you and I and declare us justified, righteous, acceptable, holy, and pleasing in his sight? He can't. He can't. And so the servant comes. The Lord Jesus comes, and he lives and dies in our place, and he exchanges places with us, and he takes our sin, and he gives us his righteousness. And it says here he's the righteous one. He's the only righteous one. You and I are unrighteous, but through faith in Christ, all of the righteousness of Christ is counted, reckoned, granted, given toward you and me. So, we stand before the Father with the resume of Jesus.

This is why, friends, we always tell you it's all about Jesus. It's not about becoming righteous through punishing yourself, through being moral, through trying harder, through vain spirituality, through self-help and pop psychology, and even religious devotion. There's one who's righteous. You trust in him. His righteousness is given to you. That's amazing! Then you live from your righteousness not for your righteousness.

He goes on. "Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death." There will be a great reward in the kingdom for the servant, Jesus, the Son of God. "And was"—and what does it say, Mars Hill? "Numbered with the transgressors." Where did we first hear that today? Luke 22:37. On his way to the cross, Jesus quotes that statement from Isaiah seven hundred years prior, the culmination of the whole proclamation that God would send a servant, a suffering servant, a saving servant, the Son of God. Jesus was numbered with the transgressors. He was crucified between two guilty thieves. "Yet he bore the sin of many, and he makes intercession for the transgressors."

Jesus is on his way to the cross, and here's the big idea. He says, "Don't forget, dear friends, we—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—wrote a book.

And let me take you back seven hundred years ago to a portion of the book, and the book promised that I was coming. The book promised that I would be poor, that I would come from a rural town. The book promised that I would live a simple, humble life. The book promised that I would not have money or power in the traditional sense of the word, like other kings and leaders. The book promised that I would never sin in word or deed. The book promised that I would be despised and rejected and shamed and hated. The book promised that I would be high and lifted up on a cross, and the book promised that I would die, and the book promised that I would be buried in a rich man's tomb, and the book promised that I would come back, and that I would justify sinners and make them friends and declare them righteous in the Son of God, and I make intercession for the guilty! I make enemies friends! I'm here as the Savior of the world! Please, dear friends, trust the book! It's all happening right now! Human history is culminating in my death, and I'll be back in three days." That's amazing. It's all true. It's all about Jesus. I can't say anything more, but I really want you to believe that, and to turn from sin, and trust in him.

PRAYER

Father God, thank you so much for a plan to save sinners. Lord Jesus, thank you for being that servant, that suffering, saving servant Son. Holy Spirit, thank you for writing this book. Thank you for empowering Jesus. Thank you for illuminating our understanding of the book and the person and work and words of Jesus. God, I'm so excited about the Scriptures. I know I'm a sinner, and I deserve hell, and everything that Jesus got, I should get. But God, there is so much life in this book.

God, I thank you for the great honor it is to teach this book at Mars Hill Church, where people hang in there for more than an hour, and ninety-two sermons in, they still like the book, and they're not tired of hearing about Jesus. God, thank you for this place and these people.

Jesus, I pray for those who don't know you yet, that they would trust the book, and they would turn to you. God, for those of us who do know you, I pray we would not grow weary in studying the book, and memorizing the book, and learning the book. And I pray for my friends, Lord God, who are in a hard, dark, tough season, that just as Jesus did, they would return to the Scriptures for clarity and comfort.

And God I pray for us all. I pray for those of us who are tender, that you would help us to also be tough and brave and bold, and for those of us who are tough and brave and bold, I pray you'd help us to be tender and loving and merciful and kind. Jesus, we're not like you, but we thank that you can help us to become more like you. So, we ask for that grace in your good name, amen.

Note: This sermon transcript has been edited for readability.